

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of the Claims will replace all prior listings and versions of the Claims in the application.

Listing of the Claims

Claims 1-18 (cancelled)

Claim 19 (currently amended): A tool suitable for use with split shot comprising:

a thimble comprising an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end and wherein the thimble comprises a first portion extending from the closed end which approximates a part of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone, and a second portion extending from the first portion which approximates a cylinder;

b) a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position ~~on the first portion which is near the second portion~~ near the open end, the curved blade having a curvature approximately matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at the position, the curved blade extending beyond the closed end[.]; and

c) a "U" shaped clip, ~~the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble~~ means for attaching the tool to clothing.

Claim 20 (cancelled)

Claim 21 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 19, wherein the thimble comprises a metal chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, steel, stainless steel, brass and copper.

Claim 22 (previously presented): A method of opening a split shot having a closed slot that is crimped around a fishing line comprising the steps of:

- a) placing a tool onto a finger tip, the tool comprising a thimble having an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, and wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end, and a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position near the open end, the curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at the position, the curved blade extending beyond the closed end;
- b) placing the curved blade into the closed slot; and
- c) manipulating the curved blade to open the slot.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade comprises pushing on the curved blade.

Claim 24 (currently amended): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade [[includes]] comprises twisting the curved blade.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade comprises dragging the curved blade through the slot.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 19, wherein said clip comprises spring metal.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein said thimble comprises a sewing thimble.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein said thimble comprises metal.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The method of Claim 28, wherein said thimble and said curved blade each comprise a metal selected from the group consisting of aluminum, steel,

stainless steel, brass and copper.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, said tool comprising a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The method of Claim 30, wherein the "U" shaped clip comprises spring metal.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The method of Claim 31, wherein the spring metal comprises spring steel.

Claim 33 (currently amended): The method of Claim 22, wherein the blade subtends an angle of ~~surrounds~~ about 60° of the approximately circular open end of the body at the position ~~circumference of the thimble~~.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, said tool comprising means for crimping a split shot, the means attached to the thimble.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The method of Claim 34, wherein said means comprises a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 36 (currently amended): A tool suitable for use with split shot comprising:

- a) a thimble comprising an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end ~~and wherein the thimble comprises a first portion extending from the closed end which approximates a part of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone, and a second portion extending from the~~

~~first portion which approximates a cylinder,~~

- b) a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position on the first portion which is near the second portion, the curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at the position, the curved blade extending slightly beyond the closed end ~~[[,]]~~; and
- c) at least one of a loop attached to the body and an aperture in the body near the open end ~~means for crimping a split shot, said means attached to the thimble.~~

Claim 37 (currently amended): The tool of Claim ~~[[36]]~~ 19, wherein said means comprises a loop attached to the body "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 38 (new): The tool of Claim 19, wherein said means comprises an aperture in the body near the open end.

Claim 39 (new): The tool of Claim 19, wherein the tool comprises a first portion extending from the closed end which approximates a part of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone, and a second portion extending from the first portion which approximates a cylinder and wherein the curved blade is attached to the thimble at a position on the first portion which is near the second portion.

Claim 40 (new): The tool of Claim 19, wherein said means for attaching the tool to clothing comprises means for attaching the tool to an elastic retractor.

Claim 41 (new): The tool of Claim 19, said tool comprising means for crimping a split shot.

Claim 42 (new): The tool of Claim 41, said means for crimping a split shot comprising a "U" shaped clip.